

DETAILED ACTION

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

The specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors, e.g., typographical, grammar, idiomatic, syntax and etc. Applicants' cooperations are requested in correcting any errors of which applicants may become aware in the specification.

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because of the inclusion of legal phraseology often used in patent claims such as "comprises" in line 10. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the claimed process/method in the column configuration (II) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for

consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 12-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

- a). Claims 26 and 28 are incomplete claims as they depend on cancelled claims 5 and 7 respectively.
- b). The claims or at least part of the claims are recited in passive rather than active steps, e.g., the recitation of "by removing the low boilers and the high boilers" in claim 12, lines 2-3 .
- c). The claimed "preferably" in claim 15 fails to ascertain the claimed invention with precision.
- d). There are insufficient antecedent basis for the following limitations in the claims:
1). " the stripping section of the main column"; and "the stripping section of the dividing wall column" in claims 15-16; and

2). "the range from.." in claims 12, 18 and 29.

e). The term "pure" and "long" as in "pure DMAc" in claim 12, and "long delay times" in claim 15 are relative terms which render the claims indefinite. The term "pure" and "long" are not defined by the claims, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

f). The inconsistent used of terminology is improper as it provides for confusion and ambiguity in the claims, e.g., "crude water-containing dimethylacetamide" in claim 12, lines 1-2, as opposed to "crude DMAc" in claim 19, line 2.

Claims 12-29 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Gentilcore discloses a process for the purification of N-N, dimethylacetamide.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to V. Manoharan whose telephone number is (571) 272-1450.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on (571) 272-1444.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Virginia Manoharan/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797